

John Jorza

2009 Volunteer of the Year



John closes his eyes and takes a deep breath, before standing up in front of the group. He makes direct eye contact and explains in detail the reality of his past relationships.

Ten other men stare back at him, shocked to hear him tell all:

He abused three women in his life - his son witnessed it too. He was controlling, he was degrading, and at times physically violent. Now he sees his place in the world differently. He knows he has the ability to make better choices and reminds himself to do so every day.

John is a graduate of Wellspring Family Services Domestic Violence Intervention Program, and now he comes back to share his story with new groups just starting out. "His story is thoroughly impactful he gets new group members motivated to focus on themselves," said Marilyn, the group facilitator. "He's an integral part of the orientation phase and we all benefit from his presence there!"

This year, for the first time in the history of our agency, John went beyond the group setting and shared his story of domestic violence in front of 1,000 guests at our Spring Luncheon. His family was there beside him to support him. The entire ballroom full of guests sat absolutely silent, listening to his every word - struck by his honesty.

"It's done behind closed doors. It's done where the results are hidden away from friends, family, others," John said. "This is why it is imperative that I do what I can, when I can, where I can, to stop the violence."

In the months following the May event, we've seen an up-tick in referrals, more questions about our domestic violence program, and requests for John to share his story with other groups.

John's courage to share his story publically has not only helped others find help, but is absolutely vital to uncovering this pervasive, yet hidden crisis.

Learn more at www.Wellspringfs.org